FREEZE FRAMES

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A weekly update of film releases

By David Sterritt

THE COLOURS OF HOPE — Amnesty International sponsored this brief, touching documentary about an Argentine couple who survived imprisonment, torture, and the temporary loss of their baby during the military regime's "dirty war" against alleged terrorism during the 1970s.

DESERT HEARTS — An inhibited woman goes to Reno for a divorce and falls in love, to her own surprise, with another woman. The movie seems sincere in wanting to explore rather than exploit its subject, but any potential insights are cut off by too-obvious characterizations and plot twists. Directed by Donna Deitch. *(Rated R)*

HARLEM SHUFFLE — Whatever happened to Ralph Bakshi, the self-styled bad boy of the cartoon world? He's gone to videoland, where he wrote and directed this "music zap" for theaters, starring the Rolling Stones and treading a treacherously thin line between racial awareness and racial stereotyping. *(Not rated)*

THE HITCHER — A teen-age boy locks horns with a mad killer on the open road. Robert Harmon directed this nasty thriller, which veers between the suspenseful, the pretentious, and the bloodthirsty. *(Rated R)*

JUST BETWEEN FRIENDS — Two women meet in an exercise class and become good friends, only to discover that Holly's husband and Sandy's lover are one and the same man. Why stay home and watch afternoon TV when you can pay good money to see the same stuff at your neighborhood cinema? Earnestly written and directed by Allan Burns. *(Rated PG-13)*

THE MONEY PIT — "Steven Spielberg presents" this strenuous, not-so-funny farce about a couple who buy a lemon disguised as a house. Directed by Richard Benjamin with more energy than wit. *(Rated PG)*

THE QUIET EARTH — A research scientist wakes up one morning to find virtually every living thing vanished from New Zealand and everywhere else; and it's partly his fault, since he was working on the top-secret "Project Flashlight" that caused the disaster. The story makes valid points about scientific and military hubris. But it's hard to take the picture's high-mindedness very seriously when the next-to-last people on earth turn out to be a young woman with Hollywood-style sex appeal and a macho aborigine to complete the triangle. Directed by Geoff Murphy. *(Rated R)*

QUILOMBO — The saga of a colony founded in Brazil by 17th-century slaves rebelling against their European captors. Directed by leading Brazilian filmmaker Carlos Diegues in a style recalling the historical-hysterical epics of his compatriot, Glauber Rocha, especially the amazing "Antonio das Mortes," which also mingled myth, music, and spectacle with stylized storytelling and agitprop violence. Unruly, episodic, fiercely committed. *(Not rated)*

SUGARBABY — An overweight woman and an underweight man have a heavy love affair in this West German hymn to hedonism, which has a downbeat ending tacked on. Directed by Percy Adlon and photographed by Johanna Heer in a restless, searching style that recalls the visual experiments of Michael Snow more than the muted charm of Adlon's own "Celeste." *(Not rated)*

RATINGS:
Films with ratings other than G may contain varying degrees of vulgar language, nudity, sex, and violence.